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The Palimpsest

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THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE

THE PALIMPSEST, issued monthly by the State Historical Society of Iowa, is devoted to the dissemination of Iowa History. Supplementing the other publications of this Society, it aims to present the materials of Iowa History in a form that is attractive and a style that is popular in the best sense—to the end that the story of our Commonwealth may be more widely read and cherished.

BENJ. F. SHAMBAUGH
Superintendent

THE MEANING OF PALIMPSESTS

In early times palimpsests were parchments or other materials from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete; and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the records of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

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THE PALIMPSEST

EDITED BY JOHN ELY BRIGGS

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The Desire for Freedom

In the days before the Civil War a negro family by the name of Pyles lived on a large plantation near Bardstown, Kentucky. This family, which consisted of father, mother, and twelve children, was a favored group, for the father, Harry M. Pyles, was a free negro. His fair complexion and blue eyes indicated a predominantly white parentage. Moreover, he had been well trained in the harness and shoe mending industry, so that he was able to support his family in comfort from the earnings of his little shop.

Tall and straight as a pine was his good wife, Charlotta, whose high cheek bones, copper-colored hue, and straight, glossy, black hair denoted her Indian ancestry. Her father was part German and part negro, while her mother was a full-blooded squaw of the Seminole tribe of Indians. She and her children were slaves of a family named Gordon that lived on a near-by plantation. As the children of a

free negro and a slave followed the status of the mother, Harry M. Pyles was not allowed to have charge of his family, although he could visit them when he wished and no one dared to molest him.

The Gordons were Wesleyan Methodists, and the father of this splendid old family was as fine a Christian as one would meet anywhere. When he died he left Charlotta Pyles and her children as a heritage to his only daughter instead of giving them to his sons. In this respect the family was fortunate, for Miss Gordon allowed them to attend church with her and enjoy many privileges. They were never made to feel that they were slaves.

Miss Gordon was a very conscientious young lady and promised her father on his death bed that she would free this family in accordance with the Wesleyan Methodist rule for the manumission of slaves. In the year 1853, Miss Gordon decided to give her slaves their freedom papers, but to insure their freedom it was necessary to move the entire family North.

Unfortunately the Gordon brothers did not share the religious views of their sister nor her wish to free the slaves. In fact, they envied her the possession of the Pyles family, particularly the boys. One of the latter, Benjamin by name, a tall light-complexioned negro with blue eyes, straight brown hair, and a fine physique, was caught one evening by Miss Gordon's brothers, and sold to a slave-driver in Mississippi. This cowardly act caused Miss Gordon to take immediate action toward removing her slaves

to the North and giving them their freedom. To keep them safe from further kidnapping activities, she took the whole family to Springfield and had them incarcerated for a short time in the local jail.

After certain legal formalities, Miss Gordon established her right to the Pyles family, and at once began preparations to take them North. In those days when the pro-slavery interests were at fever heat on account of the activities of the Abolitionists and the Underground Railroad, it was a very dangerous experience for colored people, especially free negroes, to move about from place to place. Fear that her brothers or others might kidnap some of the family en route, led Miss Gordon to send to Ohio for a white minister, a Reverend Claycome by name, to come to Kentucky and to accompany her and the family northward. Before starting Aunt Charlotta Pyles, as she was commonly called, prepared meats, gingerbread, cakes, and food of every description — enough to last the family during the trip. It would only be necessary then on the way to cook a few corn pones, make coffee, and perhaps to secure a supply of game from time to time.

In the early fall of 1853 the family set out in an old prairie schooner drawn by six thorough-bred Kentucky horses. Four extra horses, to be used to relieve the lead teams, brought up the rear. Household goods were neatly packed in the wagon bed, and women and children were crowded in the remaining available space.

The neighbors regretted their going, for the family had filled a useful place in the community. Aunt Charlotta made the best gingerbread in the neighborhood, and at all basket meetings, protracts, and the like, both white and black, she was always present to sell her famous cookies and other delicacies. Uncle Harry would be missed too, for it would take some time for the white people of the plantations thereabouts to find some one to make harness or half-soles as well as he made them.

In charge of the party was the noble-hearted white woman, Miss Gordon, who was willing to brave the scorn of her relatives, the criticism and reproach of neighbors, and to sacrifice friends, all for the sake of giving this negro family its rightful heritage. Then there was the minister who, through a bond of sympathy for the unfortunate negroes, had left his comfortable home to assist in their flight for freedom. The colored members of the party consisted of Harry M. Pyles, Aunt Charlotta, their eleven children, a small daughter and son belonging to Julian, their oldest girl, and three small boys, the sons of another daughter, Emily. Both these daughters were married but their husbands were slaves belonging to other masters, and therefore could not accompany them to the "Land of Promise".

Shortly after the party was well under way, Miss Gordon discovered that she had forgotten her register and decided to return for it. But when the party arrived at Bardstown, she was told that she could not

have the register, so incensed were the officers in the courthouse over what they considered her foolish act of giving away her property. Thereupon, she proceeded without it.

The party travelled overland to Louisville without any unusual adventures. My mother, Mary Ellen, the youngest of the Pyles children, has often said that when they arived at Louisville, she thought it was as near like the "Torment" as any place she had ever seen, because of the smoke and fire belching from the factories and distilleries. None of the children stirred far from the wagon because they were afraid they would be burned up.

After Miss Gordon had finished all negotiations with the State officers as to her right to leave Kentucky with her slaves, they boarded one of the old side-wheel steamboats so common on the Ohio in those days, and set out for St. Louis. There they met a white man by the name of Nat. Stone, who promised to guide them to Minnesota for the sum of one hundred dollars. Miss Gordon agreed to pay this amount, and once more the party set out in a covered wagon. Then Stone threatened to turn the negroes over to some slaveholders in Missouri unless he was paid an additional fifty dollars. So afraid was Miss Gordon that her plans would be frustrated that she paid him the extra fifty dollars, and the journey continued. It was a tiresome and difficult journey. Often it was necessary to throw out some meat and to use powder to keep bears and

wolves away from the wagon at night. Many times they were stopped in Missouri, but when the authorities saw two white men and a white woman with the colored people they were permitted to go on, grudgingly but unmolested.

Finally they crossed the Des Moines River into Iowa. It had been Miss Gordon's aim to go on to Minnesota, but by the time the party arrived at Keokuk cold weather had begun, and she decided to end the journey there. Uncle Harry Pyles, being something of a carpenter and mason, as well as a worker in leather, proceeded to build a little brick house for Miss Gordon and the family on Johnson Street.

During the next year, however, he found it increasingly difficult to earn enough to take care of his family, especially since there was the added burden of caring for his two married daughters and their children. The oldest boy, Barney, who had been the main driver on the trip from Kentucky, helped as much as he could with his earnings as an overland freighter from Keokuk to Des Moines.

Finally Aunt Charlotta devised a plan whereby the burden of caring for the families of her two oldest daughters could be shifted to those whose real duty it was to provide for them. She had letters written to the owner of Catiline Walker, the husband of her daughter Emily, and to the owner of Joseph Kendricks, husband of Julian, and found that these men could be bought for fifteen hundred dollars each.

While she was making plans to raise the money to purchase the freedom of her two sons-in-law, her own son, Benjamin, in Mississippi, heard of the scheme and wrote her saying that he, too, could be bought for fifteen hundred dollars. He suggested that only one of his brothers-in-law be purchased along with himself, leaving the other man to trust to fate. Aunt Charlotta, however, felt that, as her son Benjamin was not married and had no little folks to care for, it would be easier for him to liberate himself than for the others to do so. Hence, she wrote him that if he would only trust in God, a way would be provided for him to gain his freedom. This answer irritated Benjamin, and he never wrote to the family again. They did hear, indirectly, that he was later sold into Fayette County, Missouri, and was there known as Benjamin Moore. Then all trace of him was lost, and while advertisements were placed in newspapers to determine his whereabouts, no word from him was ever received again.

As a part of her plan to raise money to buy her sons-in-law, Charlotta Pyles had secured letters of recommendation from prominent white citizens, and, armed with these, she started on her trip East. At the city of Philadelphia she was received cordially by Quaker families, many of whom threw open their doors and entertained her. She also had the privilege of speaking in Independence Hall. The good people of Philadelphia not only entertained her, but allowed her to speak against the wrongs of slavery

in hall, church, and home, and provided her with means to go on and tell her story to others. Oftentimes in her travels she met and exchanged confidences with that fearless and dauntless harbinger of liberty for the negroes, Frederick Douglass.

Through the State of New York and into New England where William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Beecher Stowe, and others spoke out with all the intensity of their souls against slavery, the good woman travelled. She numbered among her new-made friends, John B. Gough, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony. These leaders admired the courage of this untutored negro, and made her way easier by arranging for audiences to hear her. The most precious heirlooms among her descendants to-day are the photos and letters of these men and women, given to Charlotta Pyles as personal reminders of their association with her in a noble cause.

It was a difficult task for a poor, ignorant woman, who had never had a day's schooling in her life, to travel thousands of miles in a strange country and stand up night after night and day after day before crowds of men and women, pleading for those back in slavery. So well did she plead, however, that in about six months she had raised the necessary three thousand dollars, returned to Iowa, thence to Kentucky where she bought the two men from their owners, and reunited them with their families.

Nor did her good work stop here. Many a slave, coming from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri,

found at the gateway into Iowa an enthusiastic member of their own race in the person of Grandma Pyles. She received them into her own home, and, with the aid of many white friends she had made on her trip, helped them to make their escape to Canada. It seems to me that I can still hear ringing in my ears the refrain which my mother used to tell us the slaves would sing when en route to freedom.

O, fare-you-well Kentucky,
You are not the place for me,
I am on my way to Canada,
Where colored men are free.

Among the daughters of Charlotta Pyles was one, Mary Ellen, who had the same indomitable spirit which characterized the mother. She had always been a favorite with Miss Gordon, and back in Kentucky she had been the one who was chosen to live in the Big House with her mistress. Whenever Miss Gordon went to church or visiting she invariably took Mary Ellen with her. Her fair complexion, gray eyes, and light hair frequently caused her to be mistaken for a white child.

I have often heard her, my mother, tell how, after Miss Gordon's father died and she had gone to live in the Big House, she would sometimes imagine that she heard a heavy step like that of Mr. Gordon coming down the stairway, and she could almost see the latch on the stair door raise. Then in terror she would rush to Miss Gordon's side to receive her

kindly embrace and to be assured that it was nothing but a trick of her childish fancy.

Again, mother would tell about a famous old wizard named Rhinehearson who lived not far from Miss Gordon's home in Kentucky. She was mortally afraid of him because he walked on his hands and feet with face and body turned upwards. Rhinehearson was a white man but whenever anyone in the neighborhood, white or black, lost anything they would consult the wizard and he would tell what had become of the lost or stolen article. He was an authority on mysteries and is said never to have laughed until he was seven years old. The incident which provoked his first laughter occurred when his father, in attempting to climb over a stake and rider fence with a small barrel of whisky, dropped the barrel which rolled away down the hill spilling its contents and leaving the owner in deep chagrin.

When Miss Gordon brought her slaves to Iowa, Mary Ellen was about seventeen years old and had never attended school. She eagerly embraced the opportunity to work for a Quaker family in Salem in exchange for her board and the chance to go to school. Later, a similar opportunity was extended to another sister, and in this way the two girls received as good an education as could be had in those early days when schools open to colored people were few indeed.

Miss Gordon, after she had given her slaves their manumission papers, continued to live with the

Pyles family until her death in the early seventies. Both she and Grandma Pyles belonged to the First Baptist Church of Keokuk, and the same pall bearers that carried the remains of Miss Gordon to the grave performed the same honor for Grandma Pyles—Aunt Charlotta—who died in 1880 at the age of seventy-four.

But the spirit of Charlotta Pyles found worthy expression in her children and grandchildren. It was her daughter, Charlotta, who, when she found the doors of the Keokuk High School closed to her son because he was colored, took the matter to the courts and secured the decision which opened the high school to white and black alike. And it was another daughter of Grandma Pyles, Mary Ellen, who, after her marriage to James Addison Morris, a steward on the Diamond Jo Line between St. Paul and St. Louis, reared and educated a family of nine children in Iowa. In her old age she joined her youngest daughter and the latter's husband, Laurence C. Jones, at Piney Woods, Mississippi, where before her death at the age of ninety-one she assisted in the work at Piney Woods School. And so the spirit of a noble woman, Charlotta Pyles, goes marching on in the efforts of her grandchildren to educate the negro race in the Southland.

Mrs. Laurence C. Jones

Early Iowa Camp-Meetings

When Iowa was younger, the roads poorer, and transportation facilities more inadequate, the means of amusement were few and the opportunities for relaxation were very infrequent. As a reward for unusual industry in the corn and wheat fields, the younger members of pioneer families were often promised a trip to the yearly camp-meeting after harvest. Thither they were lured, not by remembered paroxysms of religious fervor, but rather by the gregarious instinct necessarily stifled by long working hours and a sparsely settled community.

The camp site was chosen near a swift running creek, and in a grove of heavy timber. A huge tent was raised. Illumination was provided in a unique manner. Four forked posts were driven into the ground, small poles placed between them, and these covered with slender green poles. On this foundation, six inches of earth was heaped and on top of this earth the illuminating fires were kept burning by a voluntary firing squad from the congregation.

In the front of the tent a large platform was built for the preachers. There were usually three or four of them. The congregation was seated on improvised benches — planks placed across strings of logs. Through the center an aisle led to the speakers' table and the converts' bench. On the

right the men assembled and the women on the left.

The singing was spontaneous and without instrumental aid. Nevertheless it was not without harmony and, if one were to judge by results, inspirational. Frequently no one in the congregation possessed a hymn book except the preacher, who gave out the verses to be sung, two at a time. As the fervor of the meeting grew, improvised songs would take the place of the old-time favorites. These "spiritual songs", perfect in time and crude in expression, were effective in stirring the sinner to repentance.

Most of these old hymns have been lost, but a few have been preserved. One, by Caleb J. Taylor, described a camp-meeting scene.

Sinners through the camp are falling,
  Deep distress their souls pervade,
Wondering why they are not rolling
  In the dark infernal shade.
Grace and mercy, long neglected,
  Now they ardently implore;
In an hour when least expected
  Jesus bids them weep no more.

Hear them then their God extolling,
  Tell the wonders he has done;
While they rise, see others falling!
  Light into their hearts hath shone.
Prayer and praise, and exhortation,
  Blend in one perpetual sound;
Music sweet beyond expression,
  To rejoicing saints around.

More often the theme dwelt upon the agony of the crucifixion. A stanza from a familiar hymn by John A. Grenade seldom failed to bring contrition to the hearts of the singers.

Think of what your Savior bore
In the gloomy garden,
Sweating blood at every pore,
To procure thy pardon;
See Him stretched upon the wood,
Bleeding, grieving, crying,
Suffering all the wrath of God,
Groaning, gasping, dying.

Wrought to a high pitch of emotionalism by the singing, the people at the meeting visualized the suffering of their Savior for sinners like themselves until they felt overwhelmed by God's mercy. Meanwhile the preachers proclaimed the rewards and punishments of the two H's, exhorting the lost souls to come forward and be saved. Many were converted, and early-day conversions were remarkably permanent.

The eloquence of the early evangelists was not polished oratory. Deep conviction and powerful lungs were often their principal qualifications. From much and varied experience they learned the art of expounding the gospel.

"My Alma Mater is Brush College, more ancient, though less pretentious, than Yale or Harvard or Princeton," declared John Strange in defense of his training. "Her academic groves are the boundless

forests and prairies of these western wilds; her Pierian springs are the gushing fountains from the rocks; her Arcadian groves and Orphic songs are the wild woods and the birds of every color and every song, relieved now and then with the bass hootings of the night owl and the weird treble of the whip-poorwill; her curriculum is the philosophy of nature and the mysteries of redemption; her library is the word of God, the discipline and the hymn book, supplemented with trees and brooks and stones, all of which are full of wisdom and sermons and speeches; and her parchments of literary honors are the horse and the saddle-bags."

In the grove where the camp-meeting was held, teams were unhitched and tied to the wagons. Many people who had come from a distance pitched a tent and stayed the week. With them they brought cooking utensils, fodder for their horses, and an abundance of food. Their larders contained crates of chickens ready for the frying pan, hams, bacon, flour, sugar, coffee, new comb honey, green corn, potatoes, string beans, and watermelons. This period of relaxation from every-day drudgery was a season of feasting. Certainly there was no gastronomic asceticism at the camp-meeting. Occasionally one of the men folks had to be dispatched for fresh supplies of food.

Privileges were granted to concessionaires who dispensed lemonade, gingerbread, dried herring, raisins, candy, and watermelons. They also dealt in

jack-knives, wooden pocket combs, plug tobacco, and fishing tackle. A ubiquitous covered wagon plied an impious though flourishing trade. Jugs of whisky found their way to the thirsty and, though these were in the minority, there seemed to be sufficient trade to keep the wagon hovering on the outskirts of the grove throughout the week.

Some of the boys brought in strings of fish. Others hunted wild blackberries, and with these their mothers baked evanescent "double decked" pies.

At these meetings the political course of the nation — local, state, and national — was fashioned again and again. Arguments were bitter and prolonged. Often they lasted from one yearly camp-meeting to the next. Convictions were solid, and political conversions were far rarer than their religious counterpart. Men who had spent a winter strengthening their beliefs did not yield easily.

Unlike the hasty revival meeting of the present day — a mere episode in the lives of busy people — the early camp-meeting was a very important event to the Iowa pioneer. Simple, industrious, with few books to becloud inquisitive minds, they absorbed the best of the preachments of these camp-meeting evangelists. The preachers themselves, being sincere and hard-working, contributed not a little to the faith and sturdy honesty that was the foundation of our State.

MABEL M. MEREDITH

High Water in Western Iowa

The life of a frontiersman can not be fully appreciated by any one who has not experienced some of the many hardships, disadvantages, and perplexities incident to living in a new country. Want often confronts the pioneer with its grim look and schools him to the most rigid economy. Everything must conform to his limited circumstances, while exposure to biting frosts, pelting storms, scanty food and clothing, and toilsome journeys over almost trackless roads and swelling streams are but few of the difficulties that go with pioneering the way for civilization. Apparently the American pioneer is not content with any other environment, for when the settled ways of civilization overtake him, and the shrill voice of the iron horse supersedes that of the howling wild tenants of the forest, he shoulders his ready rifle and, followed by his faithful wife and ruddy children, pushes farther westward to reënact former scenes of his life, and point the way for others who follow in his track. Though he has accomplished much for the world, making possible the spread of science, literature, and the gospel, yet how

[This narrative of the experiences of two land seekers on a trip from Toledo to Sioux City in May, 1856, is adapted for THE PALIMPSEST from an article by N. Levering published in the *Iowa Historical Record*, Vol. II, pp. 274–279, April, 1886. — THE EDITOR]

soon he fades away in the memories of those that come after him and begin where he has left off.

About the first of May, 1856, the writer, in company with John Barber, left Toledo, in Tama County, on a prospecting tour to Sioux City, in the northwestern part of the State. Much rain had fallen; the roads were exceedingly bad; the streams much swollen. No bridges; no ferry boats; no anything in the way of public accommodations. In travelling such a distance at that time it was necessary to go prepared for every emergency. Anticipating what lay before us, we equipped ourselves with all the necessary requisites for such a trip — a good span of horses and a well-covered wagon, bedding, provisions, ropes, chains, and tools.

Graded roads and bridges were heard of, but seldom seen. During our trip frequent rains kept the roads in a precarious condition, and our progress was very slow. Some days the entire progress did not exceed five or six miles, and at night, when we crawled into our wagon to sleep, we somewhat resembled mud turtles crawling under their shells, the day having been spent in floundering through sloughs, traversing bottomless roads, and swimming streams, as our jaded team and tired limbs fully attested. It was not an infrequent occurrence to eat our dinner on the opposite side of a slough from where we had breakfasted, the time having been spent in crossing or heading the marsh. Nor was it unusual for the wagon to mire down midway in a

wide slough. Then the load would have to be packed out upon our backs through water knee deep. With a rope attached to the end of the tongue and the horses on firm ground, the wagon was rolled out and repacked. The frequent repetitions of these trials gave credence for the reflection that we might turn web-footers and take to water like some aquatic fowls.

After several days we came to Webster City. This embryo city was just beginning to assume a municipal appearance. Two stores, a hotel, and a blacksmith shop constituted its business houses. There were not, I think, to exceed a dozen houses in the place, though it was the business center for some miles around. Its citizens were go-a-head, energetic people, anticipating much for their youthful city in the near future, which they have since fully realized.

Our wanderings from Webster City to Fort Dodge were exceedingly wearisome and monotonous. There were no bridges where bridges ought to have been. Many miles of travel were necessary to go a short distance.

Arriving at Fort Dodge we found the river considerably swollen from recent rains and rather unsafe to ford for those unacquainted with the stream. Fortunately for us, we here met Father Tracy, a Catholic priest, with an Irish colony from Dubuque, on their way to eastern Nebraska. They had crossed the river and camped at the ford. When we drove up to the ford, Father Tracy made his appearance

on the opposite bank and shouted to us which way to cross, that we might avoid deep water and some large boulders. Fearing that we might not follow his directions, he mounted one of his men on a horse and sent him over to pilot us across.

Sticks were laid across the top of our wagon box and our goods placed upon them, in order to keep dry. Our guide was very careful in leading the way, frequently looking back and giving us a word of caution, while Father Tracy, quite solicitous for our safe arrival, occasionally gave directions and words of encouragement. We were soon on dry land, right side up in a warm-hearted Irish camp, greeting Father Tracy with a hearty tourniquet shake for his kindness in our behalf. Tents had been pitched, fires were burning brightly, the women were preparing the evening meal while their liege lords were enjoying their pipes and a social chat, and a score or more of young "paddies" were making the woods reverberate with their childish sports. As the day was not yet spent, we took leave of the kind Father and his flock and reached the banks of the Lizard River where we camped for the night.

Our next point was Twin Lakes—two small lakes of nearly the same size connected by a small channel of water. Fish appeared to be plentiful. We were able to scoop a good supply out of the channel with our hands as they were passing from one lake to the other. They were quite an accession to our table, as our stock of provisions was getting low. Only

one family lived at Twin Lakes, and they kept the stage station.

Twenty miles more and we were in Sac City, the county town of Sac County. About four houses, and big hopes for the future, constituted the city.

Our meanderings next led us to Ida Grove, in Ida County. Here we found a Smith and his wife, sole occupants of the grove. The exterior of their little cabin bristled with buck horns and coon skins, the interior with skins of wild animals and other trophies of the chase common to the country. Home-made furniture of the most economical character furnished the room, while real estate scooped from the bosom of mother earth furnished roof and floor. The surroundings had the appearance of the abode of a formidable Nimrod.

As night was about to unroll her sable curtains, we halted for needed rest. Our host gave us a cordial invitation to share his cabin with him, which we accepted. When the time for retiring arrived, we were shown some clapboards (or shakes) lying on some poles in one corner of the room, and were told to sleep there. Having spread our blankets on the rustic bedstead we turned in for the night. Barber, who was used to old-fashioned Pennsylvania feather beds, complained in the night of the boards being hard on bones. Our host, who slept near-by, being awake, roared out, "Turn the boards and try the other side." Barber declined the advice, however.

When gray-eyed morn peeped through the open-

ings in the cabin walls, we had lost all desire to snatch a few final winks of sleep, and suddenly acquired a very ardent propensity for early rising. We were soon up and stretching our aching limbs. Breakfast over, we moved forward toward our destination.

On arriving at the west fork of Little Sioux River, we found it high and running over. To ford the stream seemed impossible. We were not prepared for pontooning, but to cross we were determined. Near-by we discovered an Indian canoe tied to a tree. Having taken possession of the frail craft, the work of transporting our goods began at once. Soon everything but horses and wagon were on the opposite side.

The horses were next, and swim over they must. One of them being higher than the other, we concluded to send the smaller one first. A long rope was tied around his neck, the other end was carried over in the canoe by Barber, and I forced the animal into the water, while Barber pulled on the rope, so as to guide him to a good landing. It was a complete success.

The same method was used with the larger horse, but not with so much success, for when he attempted to climb the opposite bank where the first horse had gone, his fore feet sank in the soft earth so that he was unable to get out of the water. After a short rest he was turned loose, whereupon he swam to the shore from whence he had come. Another brief rest

and he was again urged into the water, but when midway over the rope became untied, and the animal, finding that he was free, started up stream, making slow progress against the strong current.

We had begun to think that he would surely drown, when Ira Price, of Smithland, came up and at a glance took in the situation. Disrobing, he plunged into the turbulent stream, swam out to the horse, grasped the halter, and made for the ford, pulling the horse after him. Another effort was made to get him ashore, but with no better success than before. The horse, being completely exhausted, turned upon his side as if disposed to make river crossing a side issue, and refused to exert himself any more.

Nevertheless, I concluded to make one more effort to save him. Taking a long rope, I threw it around my shoulder and plunged into the stream. Swimming up to his side, I tied the rope around his body close to his fore legs, then climbing out, I hastily harnessed the other horse, and hitching him to the rope, directed Barber to pull on the halter. I started my horse, when, to our surprise, out came the horse onto dry land as slick as Jonah from the whale's belly. He was soon on his feet nipping grass, as if nothing unusual had occurred. The wagon was towed across the stream with the rope and the team hauled it out on the bank.

While engaged in reloading preparatory to starting on, Thomas Macon, of Oskaloosa, and Mr. Greer, of Mount Vernon, Iowa, drove up on their way home

from Sioux City. Macon crossed the river safely but Greer, in floating his buggy across, had tied his lines to the end of the tongue. They gave way when the vehicle was in mid-stream, and the last seen of the buggy was one corner of the top as it rolled over in the turbid water. Thus Mr. Greer was left with horses, trunk, and other baggage, several miles from any house. After some deliberation he requested me to take his baggage to Sioux City and forward it to him by stage, which I did. He rode to a settler's house on the Maple River that evening, and the next morning he returned in search of his buggy, which he found some distance below the ford caught in the top of a tree that projected out into the stream. He got it out, found it but slightly damaged, hitched on, and went his way rejoicing.

The following day we arrived in Sioux City with team much jaded and ourselves worn out. Some of the disadvantages of pioneer life we know from hard experience.

N. Levering

Baseball in 1867

Two negro baseball teams were playing one day. "What's the score?" a spectator asked one of the players.

"Nineteen to nothing", the player answered.

"Beating you pretty bad, ain't they?"

"Oh, no", the player responded, "we all ain't had ah bats yet."

Such a situation as far as runs are concerned must have been more or less common back in 1867 when the first annual tournament of the Iowa State Base Ball Association was held at Burlington. Box scores of that tournament reveal from fifteen to twenty-nine runs per inning, and total scores ranging from thirty to one hundred and fifteen. Thirty-seven home runs were made by the winning team in the final game for the championship.

During the years immediately following the Civil War, baseball teams were organized very generally in Iowa cities and towns just as they were everywhere throughout the United States. The Civil War itself had stimulated interest in the game. Boys in camp sought recreation in this pastime during their leisure hours, and when the war ended these young fellows carried home their love for the game.

Baseball at that date required nine men on a side as to-day, but was played without gloves, masks, or

protectors, while pitchers tossed the ball to the batter in much the same manner as is now the practice in indoor baseball. These factors, doubtless, account for the phenomenal scoring power of the team at bat. Two scorers, one from each club, were needed to record the tallies. By 1866 several organized clubs in Iowa were engaged in hot contests and rivalry was keen.

In August, 1866, the Hawk-Eyes of Mount Pleasant defeated the Capital City Club of Des Moines sixty-six to forty-eight in a game that lasted three hours and forty-eight minutes. On another occasion the Hawk-Eyes defeated the Crescents of Burlington fifty-four to twenty-three. "A large number of ladies and gentlemen were present to witness the contest. Everything passed off pleasantly, and the game was handsomely played." The Hawk-Eyes, also, in two bitterly contested games, won from the Washington, Iowa, club.

The announcement of a State Base Ball Tournament to be held at Burlington in October, 1867, aroused considerable interest among the clubs that for two seasons had been playing regular matched games. Prizes totalling more than one thousand dollars for the first and second best teams in each of three classes were offered as inducements to draw players to the tournament. First prize for teams of the first class consisted of two hundred dollars in greenbacks and a rosewood bat valued at seventy-five dollars. One hundred dollars in greenbacks and

a silver ball valued at fifty dollars made up the second prize. Prizes for teams in the second and third classes, while not so large, were, nevertheless, attractive.

The tournament began at ten o'clock Tuesday morning, October 15th, with a game between the Crescents and Mechanics of Burlington, two teams in the second class. "Weather", said the local reporter, "was very fine"; and the roads and grounds were in "excellent order". The Crescents won this game forty-four to thirty after three hours of steady playing. In the afternoon, play was resumed at three o'clock with a game between the Active Club of Ottumwa and the Orchard City Club of Burlington, two teams entered in the third class. At the end of the fourth inning with the score forty-eight to twenty-five in favor of Ottumwa the game was called on account of darkness — to be resumed at nine o'clock the next morning. When the game finally ended the Actives had made a total of sixty-nine runs to their opponent's fifty-seven.

The big event, however, of the first day of the tournament was the game between the Scotts of Davenport and the Westerns of Burlington, two teams in the first class. Darkness ended the game at the close of the fifth inning with Davenport the victor by the score of forty-two to thirty-nine.

On the second day of the tournament the most exciting contest was between the Scotts of Davenport and the Hawk-Eyes of Mount Pleasant. "The

match", said a local paper, "was a fine one and the game skillfully played on both sides, though it was quite evident soon after it commenced that the Scotts had met rather more than their equals in the active, sturdy, and well-trained Hawk-Eyes. The sympathies of the spectators were about equally divided, and "fine plays by the members of either club were greeted with loud applause from the gentlemen and bouquets by the ladies." The Hawk-Eyes won eighty-three to fifty-seven.

"Another beautiful day greeted the base-ballers" on Thursday, the last day of the tournament. Final games in all classes aroused spectators and partisan followers to a high pitch of enthusiasm. Interest centered, though, in the game between the invincible Hawk-Eyes and the Westerns. "There was some brilliant playing by both clubs", said the reporter, "but, in the main, the Westerns were not able to cope successfully with the famous champion club of our sister city." The score by innings attests the truth of this statement.

Innings —	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	— *Total*
Hawk-Eyes —	4	21	29	0	3	18	15	25	— 115
Westerns —	2	16	3	5	4	0	9	3	— 42

"The Hawk-Eyes have fairly won the first prize", declared the official report of the tournament, "and must be conceded the championship of the State until some more accomplished rivals wrest from them this proud distinction."

BRUCE E. MAHAN

Comment by the Editor

FREE SOIL

"In all that territory ceded by France to the United States, under the name of Louisiana, which lies north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes north latitude, not included within the limits of the State contemplated by this act [Missouri], slavery shall be, and is hereby, forever prohibited." So declared the famous Missouri Compromise; and thus the future Iowa became free soil. Before 1820 there had been no legal restraint upon the ownership of slaves anywhere in the whole region west of the Mississippi River from the Gulf of Mexico to British America.

Later, when the Black Hawk Purchase was opened for settlement and made a part of Michigan Territory, the slavery prohibition of the Ordinance of 1787 was extended across the Mississippi. Within a year after the Territory of Iowa was established, the Territorial Supreme Court decided that slavery had been entirely and finally prohibited north of Missouri and west of the Mississippi both by the Missouri Compromise and the Northwest Ordinance, that slave property could not exist where slavery was forbidden, and that no permanent resident of Iowa could be a slave. Finally, Iowa was admitted

to the Union in 1846 as the first free State in the Louisiana Purchase.

"ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL"

While the blight of negro slavery never blemished the political annals of this Commonwealth, the race problem was not so happily escaped. In the very first session of the Territorial legislature, a law was passed which was calculated to discourage immigration of "blacks and mulattoes". Before entering the Territory of Iowa they had to show a certificate of freedom and give a bond of five hundred dollars to ensure good behavior.

The framers of the first State constitution recognized that "all men are created equal," but they regarded that dogma of the Declaration of Independence as "a mere abstract proposition" strictly true only when applied to man in a state of nature. Certainly they could "never consent to open the doors of our beautiful State and invite" the negro "to settle our lands", because the policy of other States "would drive the whole black population of the Union upon us." Although the Constitutional Convention of 1844 was convinced that the two races could not live together in political and social equality without degradation and discord, persons of color were not specifically excluded from the State. The founders of the Commonwealth believed that all men were entitled to freedom, but more than a score of years elapsed before negroes were given a

status of complete political and civil equality in Iowa.

THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF EDUCATION

For more than a decade after Iowa became a State, negro children had no legal right to attend a public school. A few, no doubt, were admitted, and separate schools were maintained for colored children in some places. As a measure of fairness, during this period of exclusion, the property of blacks and mulattoes was exempt from taxation for school purposes. In 1857, however, the new Constitution reversed conditions by requiring that schools should be maintained for "all the youths of the State". Thereafter no legislative discrimination was ever made with regard to color. But the question of whether a local school board could exclude negro children from a particular public school remained unsolved.

On the tenth of September, 1867, Susan B. Clark, a twelve-year-old daughter of Alexander Clark who was a prominent citizen and later United States minister to Liberia, was denied admission to a Muscatine grammar school which she was qualified to attend. Thereupon she appealed to the law, and the Supreme Court of Iowa decided that a pupil could not be excluded from any common school on account of race, nationality, religion, dress, or any other distinction which would deny equality of educational opportunity.

Seven years later, when Geroid Smith, a grandson of Charlotta Pyles, entered Keokuk High School he was expelled because citizens objected to mixed schools and also on the ground that the admission of colored pupils would "destroy the harmony and impair the usefulness of the high school." Equivalent instruction was offered in another school for negroes. The Supreme Court declared, however, that this was essentially the same as the Clark case and again ruled that a pupil could "not be excluded from the schools because of his color, or required to attend a separate school for colored children." Thus complete equality of all children was established in the schools of Iowa, without regard to race or class or creed. Perhaps Iowa leadership in literacy may be traced to that enlightened policy.

J. E. B.

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